Fight With All Your Weapons

Some years ago an acquaintance confided in me about some relationship problems he was having. As a couple, he and his wife were drifting apart. Since we had talked before about Japanese culture, my advice took the form of a quote from the swordsman Miyamoto Musashi's *Book of Five Rings*:

> "Students of the Ichi school Way of strategy should train from the start with the sword and the long sword in either hand. This is a truth: when you sacrifice your life, you must make fullest use of your weaponry. It is false not to do so, and to die with a weapon yet undrawn."

A relationship with another person, especially as a spouse in marriage, is one of self-sacrifice. To make the most of it, you have to utilize every weapon, or tool, at your disposal. It is not right to go half-way, holding back in such an arrangement. Rather than fearing that your significant other may not return your renewed passion to spend time with them, or pursue their interests, it is false to refrain from the attempt yourself.

This makes sense for more than just love and war; too often we hold back from using everything God has given us in living or promoting his Gospel, doing our daily work, or even in taking care of ourselves. We have already been counseled by our Lord not to bury our talents.

Part of making the best use of what we have is to keep such tools, talents, assets, and skills ready for whatever Providence sends our way. G.K. Chesterton writes in his book *Heretics*:

"A man who believes something is ready and witty, because he has all his weapons about him. He can apply his test in an instant."

A well-armed Christian – that is one who is fully convinced of what he believes, is ready for anything in life. He needs only to put to use those convictions, even quickly making decisions about the most important things.
As a Christian, are you ever-aware of the armaments of your faith? Or do you squander opportunities to exercise the commands of your Lord? Put your weapons to use, and do not hold back!

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Paul Nowak is a husband and father of 7, who also happens to be a writer and author. He has written *The Way of the Christian Samurai* among other books.

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